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STUDENT WELLNESS

The Colchester Public School District promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. To support our Wellness Policy, the following regulations will be followed:

National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast

Reimbursable meals served in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program will follow the USDA meal pattern requirements and nutrient standards.

Food sold or served in and by the Colchester Public Schools shall include nutritious and low-fat foods which may include, but shall not be limited to, low-fat dairy products, and fresh or dried fruit whenever food is available for purchase during the school day. This includes foods sold in vending machines, school stores, fundraisers and any other food sales during the school day.

The sale of beverages shall be limited to the following:

- milk, which may be flavored but contains no artificial sweeteners and no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce; will be low fat or fat free
- nondairy milk - lactose free milk, following the nutritional guidelines, will be available
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice or combination of such juices, containing no added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners;
- beverages that contain only water and fruit or vegetable juice and have no added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners; and
- water, which may be flavored but must contain no added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners, or caffeine.

A school breakfast program will be offered in all schools.

The school lunch and breakfast programs will use low fat foods and preparation methodology as required by state guidelines.

All parents will be provided with free and reduced meal forms. Information will also be posted on the district web site and advertised in local newspapers.

Data on student preferences will guide the food service director in menu decisions to promote increased participation.

Lunch will be served before recess in grades 3-5. Lunch will be served after recess in grades K-2.

The food services staff will receive required training as needed and food service supervisors will attend state conferences and presentations as they become available and will share information with all food service personnel.

The school menus will use whole grains and fresh fruits.

Serving size of beverages is limited to state guidelines for calorie content. Only lowfat milk shall be sold in school.

Lunchroom Climate

Colchester Public Schools shall provide a lunchroom environment where students have:

- adequate space to sit and eat in pleasant, clean surroundings;
- adequate time for meals (twenty minutes of seat time for lunch and ten minutes of seat time for breakfast); and
- convenient access to hand washing facilities before meals.

Other Foods Sold for Fundraising or Nonprofit Purposes

The federal government standards requiring schools to provide meals under the Dietary Guidelines for Americans do not apply to competitive foods sold or served outside the food service areas in the Colchester Public Schools.

Any fundraising requires approval by a school administrator. Foods sold in classrooms, at school-sponsored activities, and/or in school stores during the school day must meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards.

Beverages, other than those listed in this regulation, and foods not meeting nutrition standards may be sold if the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; the sale is at the event location; and the food or beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store.

Pursuant to state statute, whenever any group makes foods available for purchase in school during the school day, low-fat dairy products and fresh or dried fruits must be available at the same time for purchase by students.

Snack machines with food items that adhere to the Connecticut Nutrition Standards may be available to students during the school day.

All fundraising projects that occur outside of the school day are encouraged to follow the State and Federal Nutrition Standards.

Classroom Incentives

As a rule, staff members shall not use candy or any food as incentives and/or rewards. Deprivation of food shall never be used as punishment.

Student Nutrition Education

The Colchester Public Schools has developed and implemented a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, curriculum approach to nutrition in all grades. Instructional staff integrates nutritional themes into daily lessons when appropriate. The health benefits of good nutrition shall be emphasized. These nutritional themes include but are not limited to:

*Knowledge of My Pyramid and the Dietary

*Healthy diet Guidelines for Americans

*Food labels

*Healthy heart choices

*Major nutrients

*Sources and variety of foods

*Multicultural influences

*Guide to a healthy diet

*Serving sizes

*Diet and disease

*Proper food safety sanitation

*Understanding calories

*Body-size acceptances, healthy weight and dangers of unhealthy weight-control practices

Nutrition education will be offered to parents beginning at the elementary level. The Colchester Public Schools will continue to educate parents throughout the elementary, middle and high school levels via newsletters and programs offered by the School Readiness Council, as well as postings on the District /School website and/or presentations on healthy lifestyles.

The district will provide professional development for Physical Education teachers and opportunities for outside training.

Nutrition training will be integrated into Family and Consumer Sciences and Health and Physical Education electives.

A Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum will be in place for every grade, K-12, with standards-based assessments based on the CT Framework. Cooperative activities will be included in this curriculum, and ongoing student self-assessment in both health and physical education will be used to promote a physically active lifestyle. The curriculum will be evaluated and revised on a seven-year cycle to align with state guidelines and national standards.

Elementary students in grades 1-5 will receive at least 80 minutes per week of physical education and engage in moderate to vigorous activity during that time.

The teacher/ student ratio for Physical Education classes will be no greater than class size ratios as specified in the Agreement between the Colchester Board of Education and the Colchester Federation of Teachers.

Waivers for physical education will be limited to health concerns documented by a physician's note or recommendation by school nurse after consultation with parent/guardian.

All students in grades 4, 8, and 10 will participate in the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment.

Health and wellness training for teachers will be provided as required/indicated.

Family and Community Involvement

In order to promote family and community involvement in supporting and reinforcing nutrition education in the schools, the building Principal is responsible for ensuring that:

- Nutrition education materials and cafeteria menus are sent home with students and/or included in school newsletters; and posted on school websites;
- Parents are encouraged to send healthy snacks/meals/beverages to school;
- Families are invited to attend exhibitions of student health projects or health fairs;
- Communications are sent to notify students/parents when the School Readiness Council and/or other Town Agencies offer nutrition education workshops and town-wide events to promote healthy nutrition;
- As part of the Health Curriculum, nutrition education homework that students can do with their families is assigned (e.g., reading and interpreting food labels, reading nutrition-related newsletters, preparing healthy recipes, etc.); and
- School staff members work closely with other agencies and community groups to provide opportunities for student-volunteer projects related to nutrition.

A district-wide wellness committee has been established as required by federal/state law for the purposes of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the district's Wellness Policy and Regulations. The committee will meet a minimum of four times annually. Committee members shall include:

- District Food Service Supervisor
- Parent representative from each school level (preK-5, 6-12)
- Student representative from each school level (preK-5, 6-12)
- Staff member representative from each school level (preK-5, 6-12)
- Administrative Representatives (school and district level)
- Physical Education/Health Program Teacher Leader
- School Nurse
- Health Education Teacher
- Physical Education Teacher

Food and Beverages Offered to Students at School

The Colchester Public Schools encourages the use of healthy foods for all school functions and activities during the school day, e.g. parties, celebrations, feasts, sporting events, etc. Suggested foods will be shared with parents/guardians. Foods of minimal nutritional value will be discouraged.

Water will be available at water fountains in all areas of the schools.

Physical Activity

Because research shows that physical activity promotes academic success, students will not be held from recess for academic remediation. Staff members will not deny participation in recess or other physical activity opportunities as a form of discipline or punishment unless the safety of students is in question.

Elementary students in grades 1-5 will be provided with supervised recess time daily and provided with play equipment that encourages physical activity.

The physical education program provides safe and adequate equipment and facilities.

Fitness opportunities are available to students and staff through planned programs and/or consent to use the athletic facilities.

Fitness activities will be encouraged during the school day.

Intramurals and/or interscholastic activities will be offered at the middle and high school levels contingent upon budgetary resources.

The school system has a partnership with Youth Services and Parks and Recreation Department that allows for use of school facilities for community fitness activities in accordance with the Board's Facility Use Policy.

Communication and Promotion

Fitness activities will be offered as part of community events. Presentations on nutrition and wellness will be provided to staff.

The Colchester Wellness Advisory Committee will meet on a regular basis to review the implementation of the policy and evaluate its effectiveness.

Data on school fundraising, student fitness, and school meal participation will be reviewed by the District Wellness Advisory Committee on an annual basis and a report will be provided to the Board of Education